



BACKGROUND

6425 SW Sixth Avenue

Topeka KS 6615-1099

785-272-8681

www.kshs.org/sesquicentennial/

KANSAS TERRITORIAL SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

Kansas became a territory in 1854 with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission web site assembles stories of a time when Kansas captured the nation's headlines.

"The events that occurred in Kansas 150 years ago are relevant to the lives of Kansans today," said Deanell Reece Tacha, chair of the Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission, and chief judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. "This statewide commemoration will encompass the four quadrants of the state with activities, curriculum, programs, and publications. The commemoration goals will be to inspire Kansas with a sense of their history and its relevance to issues facing Kansas today."

The Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission has developed a number of official projects. They include a web site at www.kshs.org/sesquicentennial/ and a calendar of events at www.ks150events.org. Other events include a gala co-hosted by Senator Bob Dole and Governor Kathleen Sebelius; the Kansas Chautauqua "Bleeding Kansas: Where the Civil War Began," produced by the Kansas Humanities Council; a commemorative tree planting at county courthouses around the state on Arbor Day, April 23, 2004; curriculum materials for the schools; a special exhibit at the Kansas Museum of History, *Willing to Die for Freedom: A Look Back at Kansas Territory* featuring the actual Kansas-Nebraska Act, a free family day at the museum, Return to the Territory: A Kansas Family Adventure; Kansas Territorial Bibliography, an online resource; teacher training one-day workshops, a special Kansas Territorial issue in the Spring 2004 *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains*; and *First Blood*, part of KITES (Kansas Interpretive Traveling Exhibit Service).

The commission members are: Deanell Reece Tacha, chair, Lawrence; Constance M. Achterberg, Salina; Jack E. Dalton, Dodge City; Larry M. Hatteberg, Wichita; Mike Hayden, Lawrence; Yolanda Lopez, Kansas City; William L. Muir III, Manhattan; G. Hal Ross, Wichita; Karen Seaberg, Atchison; Karen Gayton Swisher, Lawrence. A 31-member advisory committee also has been appointed to assist the commission. They are: Mary Allman, chair, Topeka; Judy Billings, Lawrence; Paul Bahnmaier, LeCompton; Larry K. Burke, Dodge City; Darlene Clifton-Smith, Dodge City; Cheryl Collins, Manhattan; Marion Cott, Topeka; Senator Leslie D. Donovan, Sr., Wichita; Peggy Goertzen, Hillsboro; Karl Gridley, Lawrence; Sara Harris, Chanute; Bruce R. Kahler, Lindsborg; Fred Krebs, Merriam; Bruce D. Mactavish, Overbrook; Craig Miner, Wichita;

Senator Kay O'Connor, Olathe; Martha Parker, Overbrook; Homer E. Socolofsky, Kansas State University, Manhattan; Dr. Herschel L. Stroud, Topeka; Joyce Thierer, Admire; Jack Tinnell, Olathe; Dan Wildcat, Lawrence; David Wilson, Topeka; Andy Tompkins, Topeka; Raymond Wilson, Hays; Valdenia Winn, Kansas City; Kelly A. Woestman, Pittsburg; and Donald E. Worster, Lawrence.

For more information about the Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission, contact the Kansas State Historical Society at 6425 SW Sixth Avenue, Topeka, KS 66615; 785-272-8681; TTY 785-272-8683; www.kshs.org.